

Senate Bill 512

By: Senators Douglas of the 17th, Pearson of the 51st, Harp of the 29th, Murphy of the 27th and Schaefer of the 50th

AS PASSED SENATE

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

To amend Part 3 of Article 7 of Chapter 3 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the Georgia Student Finance Authority, so as to provide for grants to students attending North Georgia College and State University who accept a military commission; to provide for legislative findings; to provide for a definition; to provide for the amount of the grant; to provide for application for grants, certification of eligibility, and refunds; to provide for a pro rata reduction when funds are insufficient; to provide for audits of the college; to provide for a penalty for false statements; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

SECTION 1.

Part 3 of Article 7 of Chapter 3 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the Georgia Student Finance Authority, is amended by adding a new subpart to read as follows:

"Subpart 6A

20-3-440.

The General Assembly finds that it is essential for the national defense that persons be encouraged to consider military leadership positions as an honorable and rewarding profession and that North Georgia College and State University, Georgia's only state supported military college, plays a significant role in preparing and training students for professional life in the military as a profession. It is the purpose of the General Assembly, as provided for in this subpart, to encourage students to enroll in North Georgia College and State University and its military training program and to encourage such students to accept military commissions by providing for tuition grant assistance to such students.

20-3-441.

For purposes of this subpart, the term 'eligible student' shall mean a person who:

(1) Is enrolled in or accepted for enrollment in North Georgia College and State University for a minimum of 12 academic hours;

(2) Is or will be a citizen of this state for a period of at least 12 months immediately prior to the date of registration therein;

(3) Is enrolled in or plans to enroll in the Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps program at North Georgia College and State University; and

(4) Has signed a contract to accept a commission, to be effective upon graduation, no later than the end of the student's junior year as an officer in the Army, Army Reserve, or Army National Guard.

20-3-442.

There is granted to each eligible student attending North Georgia College and State University the sum of \$1,500.00 per academic semester.

20-3-443.

Each eligible student wishing to receive the grant provided for in this subpart shall submit to North Georgia College and State University an application for the grant payment at the time and in accordance with procedures prescribed by the authority. The authority is authorized to define such terms and prescribe such rules, regulations, and procedures as may be reasonable and necessary to carry out the purposes of this subpart. The authority shall not approve payment of any grant until it has received from an appropriate officer of North Georgia College and State University a certification that the student applying for the grant is an eligible student. Upon timely receipt of such certification, in proper form, the authority is authorized to pay the grant to North Georgia College and State University on behalf of and to the credit of the student. In the event a student on whose behalf a grant is paid shall not enroll as a full-time student for the school term for which the grant is paid, North Georgia College and State University shall make a refund to the authority in accordance with regulations of the authority.

20-3-444.

In the event funds available to the authority are not sufficient to enable the authority to pay on behalf of eligible students the full grant prescribed by the General Assembly, grants payable for the remaining school terms shall be reduced by the authority on a pro rata basis.

1 20-3-445.

2 North Georgia College and State University shall be subject to examination by the state
3 auditor for the sole purpose of determining whether the school has properly certified
4 eligibility and enrollment of students and credited grants paid on behalf of such students.
5 However, nothing in this subpart shall be construed to interfere with the authority of the
6 school to determine admissibility of students or to control its own curriculum, philosophy,
7 purpose, or administration. In the event it is determined that the school knowingly or
8 through error certified an ineligible student to be eligible for a grant under this subpart, the
9 amount of the grant paid to the school pursuant to such certification shall be refunded by
10 the school to the authority.

11 20-3-446.

12 Any person who knowingly makes or furnishes any false statement or misrepresentation
13 or who accepts such statement or misrepresentation knowing it to be false for the purpose
14 of enabling an ineligible student to obtain wrongfully a grant under this subpart shall be
15 guilty of a misdemeanor."

16 **SECTION 2.**

17 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.